



News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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State Board Appoints Accreditation Advisory Committee, Approves Policies Ensuring Excellent Educators

Conducting their public meeting in the Utica Community Schools today, the Michigan State Board of Education unanimously approved appointments to the Michigan Accreditation Advisory Committee as part of its new Education YES! accreditation system.

Appointees to the committee are all nationally recognized experts in accountability, measurement, school improvement, and accreditation systems, and are all familiar with Michigan and its system of standards and assessments. The committee members include:

- C. Phillip Kearney, former Professor of Education at the University of Michigan. Dr. Kearney previously was Associate Superintendent for Research and School Administration with the Michigan Department of Education.
- Sharon Lewis, Director of Research for the Council of Great City Schools. She is a former Assistant Superintendent for Research, Development, and Coordination with the Detroit Public Schools.
- Lawrence Lezotte, educational consultant and commentator, Effective Schools Products, Ltd.
- Mark Reckase, Professor of Measurement and Quantitative Methods at Michigan State University. Dr. Reckase is a former Vice-President with ACT, Inc.
- Edward Roeber, Vice-President for External Relations, Measured Progress, Inc. Dr. Roeber is the former Supervisor of the MEAP program and was Director of Student Assessment Programs for the Council of Chief State School Officers.

The Board is still on target with its timeline to release individual school building accreditation status to school districts in December 2002.

The Board also unanimously approved policy recommendations from its Ensuring Excellent Educators task force. The bi-partisan task force, co-chaired by Board Treasurer Eileen Lappin Weiser and Member John C. Austin, developed policies regarding the task force's recommendations. The policies are:

- Approving the development of a new state data-based institutional accountability system for teacher preparation institutions that publicly shares data and information on the performance of teacher candidates, and the satisfaction of graduates and employers.
- Developing and implementing a standards-based induction period for teacher licensing, including pay and quality incentives for induction and mentoring.
- Developing and implementing high quality content and performance standards for alternative pathways and models for teacher preparation.
- Developing and implementing standards for effective teacher professional development based on defined plan for instructional improvement. The policy also requires the completion of a practice-based professional development plan based on performance standards as a condition for certificate advance and renewal.
- Developing collaborative partnerships between and among the State Board, the Legislature, Governor, other state agencies, institutions of higher education, community colleges, school districts, and professional organizations to ensure that collaborative academic and practical experiences exist for teacher development.

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- Collaboratively developing a public effort among the Board, Department of Education, and other stakeholders to support teaching as a profession and to enhance the image of teachers.

“We know that teacher quality matters - both in terms of improving student achievement and creating nurturing learning environments for children,” Austin said. “We also know that we have a lot to do to improve teacher support and investment. With the help of our task force members, we will continue to focus on elevating and improving the teaching profession to ensure that Michigan schools contain the best teachers in the nation.”

Through the policy, the Board will provide leadership and work with others to sustain teacher excellence.

“Teachers are seldom given the credit they deserve for the contribution they make to society,” Weiser said. “It is our hope that these new policy actions will ensure that Michigan can ensure excellent educators in all of our classrooms.”

Members of the task force were also adamant that elevating the teaching profession needs to remain a top priority for the Board.

“We need to give good people a reason to enter into the teaching profession. The life lessons teachers convey to students on a daily basis transcend time,” said Keith Johnson, Executive Director of the Detroit Federation of Teachers and School Related Personnel and member of the Task Force. “We need to provide visible, aggressive, and effective ways to market the profession of teaching.”

In other business, Board members listened to a presentation from a group of former Avondale Middle School students, led by teacher Maria Kopicki, titled, “Straight Talk on Sexual Harassment...What You Don’t Know Can Hurt You!”. Board members asked Department staff to review the presentation materials to develop a statewide policy on sexual harassment for Michigan schools.

Board members also heard a presentation from Department of Education and Department of Treasury staff regarding the Michigan Curriculum Framework revision project. The project, a joint effort by both Departments, extends the current academic state standards to include grade-level guides for instruction in all Michigan schools.

The next meeting of the State Board of Education is scheduled for Thursday, May 9, in Monroe County. A location will be announced at a later date.

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